

**OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**Holiday-Inn Lansing West**  
**7501 West Saginaw Highway**  
**Lansing, Michigan**  
**November 8, 2006**

**Chairman Ranney** called the meeting of the Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Trails Advisory Board to order at 6:34 p.m. on Wednesday, November 8, 2006 in Lansing, Michigan.

**Members Present:**

Dick Ranney, Chair  
Glenn Moll, Vice Chair  
Jason Dinsmore  
Larry Harrington  
Sheriff Scott Strait  
John Bernard  
Peter Wyckoff

**Department of Natural Resources (Department) Staff Present:**

Jim Radabaugh, Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management (FMFM), Lansing  
Steve DeBrabander, FMFM, Lansing  
Steve Kubisiak, FMFM, Lansing  
Richard Kennedy, FMFM, Lansing  
Lt. Creig Grey, Law Enforcement Division, Lansing  
Paige Perry, FMFM, Gaylord  
Katie Campbell, FMFM, Cadillac  
Pete Lundborg, Parks and Recreation, Mears

**USDA Forest Service Staff Present:**

Carol Boll, Huron-Manistee National Forest, Cadillac

**MINUTES**

Acknowledged Minutes of the August 9, 2006, ORV Trails Advisory Board Meeting.

**Mr. Harrington made a motion, supported by Sheriff Strait, to accept the minutes of the August 9, 2006, Off-Road Vehicle Trails Advisory Board Meeting. Motion unanimously carried.**

**Mr. Ranney** added Recreational Trails Program (RTP) report under old business.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**ORV Plan Update** – **Mr. James Radabaugh, FMFM** reported the ORV plan and Department comments will go before the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) for information in December and for action in January 2007. The NRC meeting(s) will be held at the Lansing Center. He noted there will be another 30 day public comment opportunity during this process. The draft Commission Memo and Department comments will be posted on the Department website.

**Action Plan for Managing Illegal ORV Use** – **Mr. Steve DeBrabander, FMFM** reported the Forest Certification ORV Task Force completed its strategy to address illegal ORV use. The strategy was approved by the FMFM management team and a subsequent action plan developed. The strategy and action plan was provided to the auditors in October. The auditors were very pleased with the

progress made and the corrective action request (CAR) was cleared. Periodic audits will be conducted to assure the strategy is implemented.

**Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** – Mr. Ranney reported he attended an RTP advisory committee meeting to review staff recommendations for the Recreational Trails Program and Recreation Improvement Fund grant programs. He encouraged the public to provide him with their ideas for potential projects for future consideration under these programs.

**Economic Impact Study** – Mr. Ranney asked when the board would have an opportunity to provide input into the study. Mr. Radabaugh said the draft study objectives were provided to the board for their input at the August meeting. The Department will provide another copy to the board.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**ORV Grant Recommendations** – Mr. Steve Kubisiak reviewed 2007 appropriations, grant evaluation process, and recommendations for maintenance and restoration projects. The Department received 26 maintenance applications requesting approximately \$1.7 million and 6 restoration applications requesting approximately \$157,000. He noted there is an un-obligated balance of approximately \$140,000 in the maintenance category and \$294,000 in the restoration category. The Department will continue to identify projects to obligate the balances.

Mr. Ranney said high fuel costs are making it hard for clubs to find volunteers. He recommended the Department make a good faith and reasonable increase in maintenance reimbursement rates in 2007.

Mr. Radabaugh noted this would take away some flexibility but the Department will consider an increase once the ORV plan is approved by the Natural Resources Commission.

Sheriff Strait requested a list of the 2007 ORV law enforcement grants. He also requested a list of 2006 ORV law enforcement grants and expenditures. The Department will provide this information to the board.

**Letter Sent to County Officials Regarding Opening Road Systems to Off-Road Vehicles** – Mr. Radabaugh reported the Department sent a letter to all counties in mid September regarding the use of ORVs on county roads. He referred them to the letter, briefing paper, and information letter from the Department of the Attorney General. It is the Department's position that counties are exceeding their jurisdiction and authority when opening all county roads to ORV use. The Department's primary concerns are public safety and environmental damage that could occur on both public and private lands. Fulfilling Department land management objectives and addressing illegal damage identified through the Forest Certification process are also primary concerns. The Department would like to work with local governments to designate specific access routes. Mr. Radabaugh said the Department believes designating specific access routes would be more efficient from both a law enforcement and land management perspective, and would still provide economic benefits desired by local businesses. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Harrington said the County Commissioners in the Upper Peninsula are wary of where the Department is going to go on this issue, but he thinks there can be a happy medium. He said the counties are not averse to working with the Department and noted law enforcement is a key factor to be considered.

Mr. DeBrabander reported he met with the UP County Commissioners at their fall meeting and he will be meeting with Dickinson County and possibly others later in November.

**Sheriff Strait** reported there was a lot of unmanaged ORV use occurring in Mackinaw County which prompted him to work with local riding groups and the U.S. Forest Service. He recently authored an ORV ordinance for Mackinaw County and distributed a map. He reported a County may pass an authorizing ordinance, but cannot dictate to the Townships what to do. He also noted the difference in state ORV policy as it relates to ORV operation on state forest roads in the Upper Peninsula and that this adds another dimension to designating local access routes in the Upper Peninsula.

**Mr. Ranney** said the most important thing is to manage this issue in a responsible manner for the good of society.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

**Law Enforcement -- Safety Education Update** – **Lt. Creig Grey** reported the Safety Education Work Group met earlier today and are very close to finalizing the course curriculum. It will focus on All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and off-highway motorcycles and include a mandatory class room course with optional hands-on training. He said he is very pleased with contributions from the workgroup and the final product. The new training manual will be available this spring and will be available on-line.

**Mr. Ranney** believes great strides have been made in increasing the availability of the class room course to over 7000 students last year, but expressed frustration in not making the hands-on component mandatory.

**Mr. Dinsmore** asked if an instructor training academy is planned. **Lt. Grey** said the instructor academy will be rolled out in phases.

**Mr. Ranney and Lt. Grey** recognized the workgroup members and thanked them.

**Forest, Mineral and Fire Management** – **Mr. Kubisiak** reported based on estimates from the budget office the current balance in the ORV Trail Improvement Fund account is \$3.7 million. He reported 2006 ORV license sales to be 178,601 as of October 24. He noted final sales figures for 2004 was 185,743 and 185, 776 in 2005.

**US Forest Service** – **Ms. Carol Boll** provided background and an update on the national travel management rule. Motor Vehicle Use Maps will be prepared by each national forest to show roads and trails that are open to motor vehicle travel. The maps will be reviewed on an annual basis. The maps will be free to the public and can be downloaded from the internet. Following is the publication schedule for national forests in Michigan: Ottawa – April 2007, Hiawatha – September 2007, Huron – March 2008 and Manistee – March 2009. Visit [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us) for more information.

**Ms Boll** reported a National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) Workshop was held in Escanaba in October. A second workshop is being planned in the Lower Peninsula in early 2007. Visit [www.nohvcc.org](http://www.nohvcc.org) for more information.

**Ms. Boll** reported the Forest Service will be conducting a national visitor use survey on all three Michigan national forests from October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007. She noted the value and importance of the survey and urged the public to participate.

**Ms. Boll** reported Cedar Creek Trailhead renovation is complete. The Mio Ranger District is seeking public comment on a new section of motorized trail that will connect the village of Lupton to the designated trail system. Questions/comments may be directed to Steve Goldman or Dwight Devereaux at 989-826-3252 ext. 3313.

## **PUBLIC APPEARANCE**

**Paul Mulder, Great Lakes Four Wheel Drive** said he would like a copy of the grants recommendations distributed to the audience and available to clubs especially when he hears about potential fee increases. He compared ORV and snowmobile operation on roads and believes the laws are unfair to the ORV community. **Mr. Kubisiak** said grant recommendations are preliminary and will be made available to the public when they are approved.

**Dana Smith, ATV Off-Road Club** asked if the law on the Governor's desk that would repeal the helmet law for on road use of motorcycles would affect ATV off-road use. **Lt. Grey** said the legislation deals with Public Act 300 and it would not affect ATV off-road use. **Mr. Smith** asked if there was a process to submit ideas for potential sites for an ORV park. **Mr. Dinsmore** suggested he work with local units of government to gather local support and noted the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund as a potential funding source. He was also encouraged to work with trails program staff if he had ideas for specific sites.

**Glenn Moll** expressed concern with the design of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and their impacts on the environment. He noted most ATVs are manufactured with a live rear axle that causes erosion and handles poorly on paved surfaces. He believes that if ATVs were manufactured with a differential gear or posi-traction they would have less environmental impacts. It was suggested that the National Off-Highway Vehicle Council or the Consumer Product Safety Commission may assist with addressing this issue with the manufacturers.

**Mr. Dinsmore made a motion to adjourn, supported by Mr. Harrington. Motion unanimously carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

#### **Next Meeting:**

Determination of the next meeting date was tabled until the date is set for the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) Workshop tentatively scheduled for February 2007.

#### **Public Present**

Bruce Suydam, ATV Off-Road Club of MI  
Dana Smith, ATV Off-Road Club of MI  
Sue Thrushman, ATV Off-Road Club of MI  
Kevin Drnach, ATV Off-Road Club of MI  
Bob DeVors, Great Lakes 4WD Association (GLFWDA)  
Pat Brower, 2 Trackers 4WD Club  
Paul Mulder, GLFWDA  
Lewis Shuler, Cycle Conservation Club  
Melissa Preston, ATV Off-Road Club

Dan Stewart, ATV Off-Road Club  
David Thomas, ATV Off-Road Club  
Trish Moorton Thomas, ATV Off-Road Club  
Tonia J. Erlenbeck, ATV Off-Road Club  
Eva Wessel, ATV Off-Road Club  
Rick & Jacky Robinson, ATV Off-Road Club  
Terry Grost, Rustbelt 4x4 Trailriders Assoc.  
Thomas Dunn, AMA District 14  
Jacob Meganck, Over 50" ORV's